

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP



A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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BRADY'S CHAMPION STORIES

by J. C. Dykes

Rangerana Collector

"Rube, the Ranger; or, The Green Mountain Boys of '76," No. 15 and "The Rebel Spy; or, The Scouts of the Winooski," No. 16 (a sequel to No. 15) both issues of "Brady's Champion Stories" are among the rarer of my Ranger Dime Novel items. This series seems to be almost unknown to Dime Novel collectors. It is not mentioned in Charles Bragin's "Dime Novels—Bibliography 1860-1928," Brooklyn, N. Y., 1938 or in the lists included in W. C. Miller's "Dime Novel Authors 1860-1900," Grafton, Mass., 1933. The Dean of Dime Novel Collectors, Charles Jonas, did not have a single issue in his famous collection and he writes me that the series was new to him after 35 years of booklet collecting. The New York Public Library collection does not contain a single issue in this series according to recent information.

My search started in 1940 with a single clue before I had any knowledge of the existence of the series. On Sept. 3, 1940 I bought "Rube, the Ranger," (DeWitt's) "Champion Novels" #16 from Goodspeed's in Boston. I noted that "Rube, the Ranger" had been copyrighted by Frederic A. Brady in 1869 although it bore the imprint of Robert M. DeWitt as publisher. As a Ranger collector, I had long been a "first edition" addict and suspected that my "Rube, the Ranger" was not the first printing I was eager to obtain the Frederic A. Brady edition. Letters and visits to dealers brought absolutely no results during a two-

year period. Sometime after I came to Washington in 1942 I called at the Rare Book Room of the Library of Congress and there in the vault was the first edition of "Rube, the Ranger" along with some 19 other issues of the "Brady's Champion Stories" series! Here was the long sought information—I knew definitely that there was a Frederic A. Brady edition and all that remained was to find a dealer with a copy that I could afford to buy. Three more years went by and then by a fortunate turn of the wheel, just three months ago, I had the opportunity to acquire the Brady edition of "Rube, the Ranger" and with it the sequel, "The Rebel Spy," and thus the long trail ended—both are now in places of honor among my Ranger Dime Novels.

Some collectors will be interested in a description of the series. It is a booklet series that includes twenty numbers at least and it was issued semi-monthly in 1869 and 1870. The size is approximately $4\frac{1}{4}'' \times 6\frac{1}{4}''$ with an average of 100 pages per issue. There is a brightly colored illustration on the front wrap of each issue—described by the publisher as "Handsomely got up in Illuminated Covers." The back wrap is used to advertise "The latest and most popular Song and Joke Books" and to list the previous issues in the series. The publisher was Frederic A. Brady, 26 Ann St., New York, and the price was ten cents.

All of the "Brady's Champion Stories" were reissued by Robt. M. DeWitt in the "Champion Novels" series so it seems likely that DeWitt acquired the rights to this particular

Brady publication. DeWitt should not be considered as the successor to Brady since he was already in the Dime Novel publishing field with "DeWitt's Ten Cent Romances" as early as 1867, two years before Brady began to issue his "Champion Stories."

The twenty numbers included in the Library of Congress collection or listed by the Rare Book Room are as follows:

- #1—"Ivan, the Terrible"—Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #12.
- #2—"The Phantom Wrecker" (1869) Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #13.
- #3—"Ottawa Jim; or, The Bear Hunter" (1869) — Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #1
- #4—"The Sea Tiger; or, The Last Shot" by Capt. Crostrees (1869) Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #14.
- #5—"Blanche, the Pearl of Red River" by E. Bliss (1869)—Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #11.
- #6—"Grey-Hawk: The Pawnee Brave" (1870)—Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #9.
- #7—"The Scout's Revenge; or, The Old Man of the Mountain" (1870) Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #10.
- #8—"Mitty Doyle; or, The Trapper's Daughter" (1870)—Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #8
- #9—"The Girl Pirate; or, The Cruise of the Thunder Cloud" (1870)— Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #15.
- #10—"Red Hatchet, the Crow Chief" (1870)—Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #7.
- #11—"Fanny Campbell, the Female Pirate Captain" by Lieut. Murray—pseudonym of Maturin M. Ballou (1870)—Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #5.
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- #13—"Red Foot, the Skimmer of the Prairie" (1870). — Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels 4.
- #14—"The Vulture's Bride; or, Jack Wyndon's Trail" by Harry Winston—pseudonym of Thomas C.

Harbough (1870).—Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels 3.

- #15—"Rube, the Ranger; or, The Green Mountain Boys of '76" by Geo. Albany—pseudonym of Joseph A. Nunes (1869).—Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #16.
- #16—"The Rebel Spy; or, The Scouts of the Winooski" by Geo. Albany—pseudonym of Joseph A. Nunes (1870).—Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #17.
- #17—"Swamp Seth; or, The Brother's Oath" by J. M. Bildon (1870)— Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #2.
- #18—"The Last Witness; or, The Lone Hunter of Chestnut Valley" by George Albany—pseudonym of Joseph A. Nunes (1869) Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #18.
- #19—"Roaring Ralph, The Panther Slayer" by Geo. Albany—pseudonym of Joseph A. Nunes—Reissued as (DeWitt's) Champion Novels #20.

NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings

Contributions given toward the Gilbert Patten Memorial fund so far:
 A Very Dear Friend \$50.00
 David C. Adams 2.00
 E. Dudley Evans 2.00
 Clyde Wakefield 1.00
 Eli A. Messier 1.00

Come on fellows, let's make this a real memorial for one of our members, Gil Patten of the old school of dime and nickel Novel writers. What do you say, all together now!

Bill Burns has been very sick for 4 or 5 weeks with La Grippe, as well as an attack of ulcers of the stomach, and his wife is sick too. Talk about hard luck for a family, this is it. We the Bro. wish you and your wife a speedy recovery, Bill.

Bill also says he finds that the Boys of New York Pocket Library catalog on the back cover, show that 75 per cent of the titles came from the Boys Star Library. Probably Tousey never published an original tale in Wide Awake Library, either. Lots of tales here can be traced back to the old story papers. Beadles Novels were mostly reprints from his old

story papers. Street & Smiths Log Cabin and Nugget Libraries were mostly reprints from their New York Weekly. Bill intends to write an article some day, when he gets better, on all the different reprints of those three companies and others.

David C. Adams has had a very hard pull, since he was held up and robbed, and struck over the head some 4 months back. He is feeling better now, thank the good Lord, he is. And talk about robberies and all kinds of crime, boy or boy, they have it out there, 244 and up in one day and night and so on. You aren't even safe in your own house, let alone anywhere else. (My next door neighbor, a fellow by the name of Bill Lyons, said one day, Ralph, Lord help us all when this war is over, and by golly, he's right.)

Bob Smeltzer says "Frank Tousey, Editor and Yacht Owner died in New York City, Sunday, Sept. 7th, 1902."

Sam Conner says the item about Dr. C. A. Stephens in Newsy News, January Roundup, that Mr. Stephens never wrote for any old story papers, only the old Youths Companion, printed in Boston, Mass., as Mrs. Stephens gave Sam that impression some 7 or 8 years ago when he last saw her. (Thanks for righting us, Sammy).

Al Urban made a fine haul last May, of 62 James Boys Weeklies in very nice condition, from an old bunk house out in Wyoming. (That's what I call real luck, good for you Pal.)

Our new member from Winchester, Va., says he is a great reader. Says he expects to read this winter a nice lot of miscellaneous items, such as lots of old novels, also many of Halldeman-Julius 25c books, lots of little blue books, lots of cloth bound books, 150 to 200 Western magazines, also Library books, Histories, etc. That's quite a diet. So we wish you all the luck in the world, Bill.

Miss Ida M. Schwartz brother Fred published Home Visitor, and not Ladies Home Journal. My mistake, sorry.

Say Fellows, how about an index to the Dime Novel Roundup—don't you think it would be very nice to have one. I think so, and Bro. Flaura has offered to make up a fine index of everything to date, so all in favor, write to ye editor, and tell him the grand news. On account of printing

prices, I'll have to charge 10¢ for each index, and it'll be worth it, too.

Luck, I'll say it is, for George French writes me that he had a true thrilling adventure. It was over in the village of Kezar Falls, Maine, there lives alone an old fellow of 82, who used to hunt a lot with George's father. He lost his only companion, his wife, last May. Consequently is pretty much dejected, so George dropped in last week to see him. George found him worse off, than he had anticipated, for besides being pretty much discouraged, he was having a bad time with an aching foot which was perched on the table to allay the pain. During our conversation, we got on to the subject of dime novels. He said he had heard that I was on their trail, and of course I replied in the affirmative.

Incidentally, George says he has written ye editor several times for a Comic tale in either Wide Awake or the Comic Library in which there were two parts, part 1 had a picture of a bob-sled scene, that was loaded with youngsters, whizzing down a hill, and part 2, that of the spill. Well, it was in the home of this old timer, that I saw this novel away back in the '80s.

From pure sentiment I have wanted to get that story. On my agreeing that I am on their trail, he invited me to take a look out in his (water closet) out back of the house, deep down in a box that had sat there for years, serving as a toilet paper receptacle. Says he, "I have been using them old novels for toilet paper a long time, so you may find some that are not torn up." I hustled out, probably much faster than he had been accustomed to making the distance, and grabbed a whole armful of seed catalogs, mail order catalogs, etc., from a big box and flopped them over. Wow! The first object of interest that I spotted was one half of a large Old Cap Collier, my heart sank. But wait! The next was a Frank Reade Library, a corker. The next a complete Old Cap Collier, large size. My courage was revived. Another grab, and out came another Reade, then several Beadles, then at least 18 Good News, and still they came—Great Gosh, several early Tip Tops in good shape, below 100 and Comics, Fireside Companions, and old

Almanacs. Soon I had reached the end without having experienced the big thrill that I had vaguely hoped to derive from the unusual event, viz., that of finding the Comic novel that I have discussed. I carried the bunch in to show him, and laid a bill on the table, remarking that it was the first time I had ever known any one to be using toilet paper worth 10c to 25c a sheet. Now for the climax. As I stood there, the door opened, and in walked an old fellow with a novel in his hands—a Wide Awake Comic. "Here's that antique I borrowed," said he, passing it to my host, who in turn handed it to me. I took one look at it, then clutched the table to keep from falling in a dead faint. It was the original novel of all—the one that I had read over 58 years ago. (This Ralph, is a true story).

Ray Mengar says, Ralph, I missed out on the opportunity of meeting Gil Patten before he died because I was ignorant of the fact that he was staying on his son's ranch in Vista, Calif. I felt real bad about it when I read the news in the Roundup. Vista is only 35 miles from where I live and I have often been there in connection with my business, but never dreamed that the author of Frank Merriwell was nearby. Well, it is too late now but I still intend to call at the Patten ranch and if possible visit Gil's grave. Tip Top was really the King of Weeklies. Read one of those famous baseball stories and you will soon find out why; story is as modern as tomorrow's world series. Well, Gil is gone, God bless him. (Note. Gil was cremated, and his dust put in an urn, at Chapel of Cardinal Virtues, Forest Hills Cemetery, Boston, Mass.)

Ye editor Cummings is putting all his novels in file holders, as every time they are handled, they wear away, and tears and pieces fall away, so these file holders are great, just pin them in, with a small stapler, and they are good for a lifetime. Can be easily removed, if need be. Some job, but when it's done, it makes your collection look real interesting and worthy. Clyde Wakefield gave me this idea, as he has all his novels in file binders. File binders can be bought at \$12.25 a 1000.

J. D. Hardin died July 25th, 1945, also an old members mother, Frank

Korvalyzeck of 169½ Washington St., Worcester, Mass., used to be Ward St., remember, she died August 19th. God bless them both.

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Ralph F. Cummings

Fisherville, Mass.

P. S.: I have others too.



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(Charles Bragin, Secretary of the Dime Novel Club, recommends purchase of these reprints by its members, of those they haven't got.)

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Ralph F. Cummings

Fisherville, Mass.

